



making our mark

NIAGARA
OFFICIAL PLAN

PDS 10-2019

Update on Natural Environment Work Program

February 20, 2019 – Presentation to Planning and Economic
Development Committee



Background

- **PDS 41-2017** outlined the 8 major background studies required to support the New Regional Official Plan
- **PDS 6-2018** was the project initiation report and sought direction for preliminary consultation
- **PDS 18-2018** was the project framework report



Drivers for Natural Environment Work Program

- Conformity with Provincial requirements
- Need to develop new natural system(s) and policies to address concerns from a range of stakeholders and other users:
 - Feedback has been that existing policies are out-of-date and difficult to use.
Mapping also requires review and update
- Need to have a system that considers, and is compatible with agriculture and other land uses



Scope for Natural Environment Work Program

In-Scope	Out-of-Scope*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Heritage Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodlands, wetlands, habitat, habitat of endangered and threatened species, fish habitat, etc. • Hydrologic Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streams, seepage areas, wetlands, etc. • Region's watercourse identification and mapping project • Water Resource Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater systems • Surface water systems • Natural Hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding hazards, erosion hazards, and dynamic beach hazards, etc. • Wildland fires as per Section 3.1.8 of the PPS • Provincial Natural Heritage Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and Urban River Valley designation • Growth Plan Natural Heritage System • Niagara Escarpment Plan as it relates to the municipal planning process • Watershed Planning & Stormwater Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregates & Petroleum Resources • Source Water Protection

*Official Plan policy development for out-of-scope items to be addressed separately

Project Overview – Natural Environment

Project Phase	Activities
1	Project Initiation and Procurement <i>[Complete]</i>
2	Background Study and Discussion Papers for Mapping and Watershed Planning Priority Areas <i>[Ongoing]</i>
3	1 st Point of Engagement: Inform on Background Study
4	Develop Options for Natural System(s)
5	2 nd Point of Engagement: Consultation on Options for the Natural System(s)
6	Develop Regional Natural System(s)
7	Develop OP Policies & Finalize Mapping
8	3 rd Point of Engagement: Draft OP Policies and Schedules
9	Other Implementation Tools



Key Issues to be Addressed

- The scale and methodology that natural environment features and systems are mapped by the Region
- A framework for watershed planning in the Region
- Offsetting, compensation, mitigation, vegetation protection zones, and buffers
- Woodlands, shorelines, invasive species, and climate change





Progress to Date

- Consulting team has been retained
- Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been formed and engagement has begun
- Meetings with mapping working group in support of high-priority Mapping Discussion Paper



Next Steps

- Complete the high-priority Mapping and Watershed Planning Discussion Papers and Comprehensive Background Study
- 1st major point of engagement - focusing on education and sharing information:
 - Stakeholders
 - Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - Public
 - Local Councils
 - Planning and Economic Development Committee

